

Amendments to the Drawings:

Please add the attached figure to the present Application. No new matter is believed to be added by this figure.

Attachment: One sheet of drawings embodying a new figure is included herewith.

Remarks:

Consideration of the application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

It is believed that the present preliminary amendment is being filed before the mailing of an Action on the merits.

Claims 2 - 22 are presently pending in the application. Originally filed claim 1 has been canceled.

The title of the Application has been amended. The new title is **Personalized Financial Debit-Credit Method and System**.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.125, Applicant has filed simultaneously herewith, a substitute specification arranged as provided in 37 C.F.R. § 1.77(b). The amendments to the specification are supported by the original specification, pages 6 - 10, as well as the original title of the invention, abstract and claim. As such, it is believed that no new matter has been added to the application by way of these amendments. Additionally, Applicant's representative has supplied with the substitute specification, a Statement that no new matter has been added by way of the substitute specification, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.125.

Additionally, included herewith is a new sheet of drawings for the present case. The present sheet of drawings is supported by pages 7 - 10 of the originally filed specification. As such, it is believed that no new matter has been added by the submission of this drawing.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 2 - 22 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Please charge any fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,



For Applicant

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[Substitute Specification Showing Interlineations]

PERSONALIZED FINANCIAL DEBIT-CREDIT METHOD AND SYSTEM

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~~TITLE OF INVENTION~~

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10 ~~Pay bills and accumulate wealth using a personalized~~
~~financial debit credit combination card that allows the user~~
~~to make payment transactions against the user's own funds and~~
~~encourages the user to pay back the account on a monthly basis~~
~~for the charges made. If payments are not made punctually,~~
15 ~~then the account holder is also responsible for paying~~
~~interests, late fees, and processing charges to his or her own~~
~~account.~~

~~CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS~~

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~~"Not Applicable"~~

~~STATEMENT OF FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH/DEVELOPMENT~~

25 ~~"Not Applicable"~~

~~SEQUENCE LISTING~~

~~"Not Applicable"~~

5 FIELD OF INVENTION

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10 This invention pertains to a ~~utility patent to which may be~~
~~granted to anyone who invents or discovers a new and useful~~
~~process or a new useful improvement thereof.~~ a system and
method to pay bills and accumulate wealth using a personalized
financial debit-credit combination card that allows the user
to make payment transactions against the user's own funds and
15 encourages the user to pay back the account on a monthly basis
for the charges made.

DESCRIPTION OF PRIOR ART

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5 The first recorded use of credit cards in the United States occurred in the early 1900s, when individual department stores, communication companies, hotels and other travel companies, oil companies, and various other businesses began issuing small metal cards to their preferred customers. These
10 cards, sometimes called "metal money", offered customers an interest-free, deferred payment option. Unlike today's cards, customers could only use their "metal money" with the company or business that issued the card.

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 The popularity and use of this type of charge card increased until World War II when all use of credit and charge cards was prohibited. After the war ended, however, charge
20 cards bounced back in use and popularity, becoming even more accessible to the general public.

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25 When consumer trends indicated that customers with charge cards were spending more than other consumers, banks became

very interested in the potential profit behind the credit card industry. The Franklin National Bank in New York issued the "Charge It" card in 1951, allowing customers to make charges with local retailers. Impressed by the success of the "Charge
5 It" card, other local banks introduced similar services to their local customers.

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10 In 1950, Diner's Club introduced the first universal credit card. Designed especially to meet the travel and entertaining needs of business men, the Diner's Club card could be used at a variety of restaurants, retailers, and other businesses. American Express released their own major
15 universal card in 1958.

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Bank of America introduced the first "revolving-credit"
20 card, called BankAmericard in California in the late 1950's. The "revolving-credit" plan gave customers the option to pay their credit card debt all at once, or pay a monthly minimum with interest over a longer period of time, marking an important milestone in the development of the credit card
25 industry.

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In the mid-60s Bank of America began licensing other banks across the nation to issue BankAmericards, allowing
5 smaller banks to offer expanded services to their local customers. Master Charge followed suit, and by 1969 almost all independent bank charge cards were licensed through either BankAmericard or Master Charge.

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To facilitate international expansion, BankAmericard changed their name to Visa in 1976. Master Charge followed by changing their name to MasterCard.

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Bank Card Associations, such as Interlink Association, Western States Bank Card Association, and National
20 BankAmericard, Inc. emerged in the 1960s to manage the enormous task of issuing and processing charge cards across the nation. This made it possible to better regulate, manage and streamline the credit card transaction process.

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Electronic card authorizations were introduced in the 1970s, allowing retailers to get approval for transactions 24 hours a day. And by the late 1970s, magnetic strips on the back of cards, along with electronic dial up terminals
5 shortened the transaction approval process to only 1-2 minutes. Now card authorizations can be almost instantaneous, allowing even greater convenience for both the retailer and the customer.

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Today, more than 84 million US households hold at least one credit card, with credit card spending levels reaching over \$1 trillion dollars each year. Consumers can find a
15 credit card to meet virtually any financial need, special interest, or credit background, and credit cards are now accepted by millions of retailers, whether one shops with traditional merchants, by phone, mail, fax or online. With so many cards available offering so much shopping convenience,
20 it's not hard to tell why credit cards continue to grow in popularity.

~~PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE PRIOR ART~~

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In the United States consumer debt has more than doubled in the past 10 years to record levels. According to a January 2004 Federal Reserve report, in November 2003 consumers increased their borrowing by \$4 billion, or an annual rate of increase of 2.4 percent, pushing total debt to \$1.994 trillion. That compares with a record increase of \$8.3 billion in October 2003 or an annual rate of increase

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American consumers owed a grand total of \$1.9773 trillion in October 2003, according to the latest statistics on consumer credit from the Federal Reserve. That's about \$18,654 per US household, a figure that doesn't include mortgage debt. The number is up more than 41 % from the \$1.3999 trillion consumers owed in 1998.

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20 The majority of consumer borrowing, about 63 %, is represented by "non-revolving" debt such as automobile loans. But "revolving" credit, which most typically involves credit cards, is an increasingly significant part of the equation. Revolving debt currently totals \$735.3 billion or more than \$8,000 per household according to CardWeb.com.; that's about 31% higher than it was five years ago. The figure is 167% more

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than the \$3,000 average revolving debt for households in 1990.

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5 The average American has 2.7 bank credit cards, 3.8
retail credit cards and 1.1 debit cards, for a total of 7.6
cards per cardholder, CardWeb.com said. About 18 % of all
personal consumption expenditures in the country are made on
bank credit cards. Add in retail cards and debit cards and the
10 figure rises to 24 %.

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 The most troubling aspect of all these credit card
15 transactions is that many Americans don't see their income as
a spending cap. About 43% of U.S. families spend more than
they earn, according to a Federal Reserve study. And on
average, Americans spend \$1.22 for every dollar they earn,
according to Myvesta.org.

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 Key drivers of debt expansion in recent years include
unusually low interest rates; the hot housing market, which
25 has encouraged buyers to stretch for new homes; the aggressive
extension of credit to consumers with weak credit scores; and

the rising popularity of Internet shopping, in which credit cards are the currency of choice.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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What is provided is a system and method to pay bills and accumulate wealth using a personalized financial debit-credit combination card that allows the user to make payment transactions against the user's own funds and encourages the user to pay back the account on a monthly basis for the charges made. If payments are not made punctually, then the account holder is also responsible for paying interests, late fees, and processing charges to his or her own account.

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More particularly, there is provided a financial debit-credit card that allows the consumer to make purchases against his personal savings account (debit), and forces the consumer to repay the funds expended prior to a deadline (credit); otherwise finance charges and fees are assessed against the personal savings account.

The general idea behind this patent application is to make available to a specific group of consumers a financial credit card that provides the services that existing debit and credit cards offer today; with the exception that instead of

paying interests and fees to credit lenders, the consumer can opt to pay himself or herself for the use of his or her own funds. In other words, with this service, a consumer who has savings in a bank account (in this case a credit line) and elects this service, can make debit transaction against his or her own account and repay himself or herself for the use of the funds, plus finance charges (interests).

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The main advantage of this idea is that it solves the problem that millions of Americans have today as discussed in the "Problems Involved in the Prior Art" section above: it gives consumers the opportunity to increase their savings through the use of their own moneys, while taking advantage of the conveniences that financial cards provide. At the same time, this service will help slow down the lending expansion that is putting Americans in bigger debt every year.

20 **DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS**

The sole figure of the application is a flow diagram of one embodiment of the method of the present invention.

"Not Applicable"

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

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As discussed above, consumers can find a credit card to
5 meet virtually any financial need, special interest, or credit
background. However, a financial card that allows consumers to
use their own personal funds to make transactions and pay
themselves interests and fees for the use of those funds is
not available today.

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To address the short-comings of the prior art, the
present invention relates to a system and method to pay bills
and accumulate wealth using a personalized financial debit-
credit combination card that allows the user to make payment
15 transactions against the user's own funds and encourages the
user to pay back the account on a monthly basis for the
charges made. If payments are not made punctually, then the
account holder is also responsible for paying interests, late
fees, and processing charges to his or her own account. More
20 particularly, there is provided a financial debit-credit card
that allows the consumer to make purchases against his
personal savings account (debit), and forces the consumer to
repay the funds expended prior to a deadline (credit);
otherwise finance charges and fees are assessed against the
25 personal savings account.

Referring now to the sole figure, the ~~The~~ process 10 of
 5 issuing and using the financial card proposed in this
 invention would work as follows. ~~The customer would~~

- 10 • The customer would ~~E~~establish a savings account with any
 bank and strictly for the purpose of making transactions
 using the financial card proposed here. (Step 12)
- The customer would ~~R~~request the financial card from the
 bank. (Step 13)
- 15 • The customer would ~~S~~set the maximum amount the savings
 account can be charged against. (Step 14) In other
 words set the minimum acceptable balance.
- The customer would ~~Set~~ ~~set~~ the interest rate allowed to
 be charged for the use of the funds. (Step 14)
- The customer would ~~S~~set the monthly minimum payment as a
 percentage of the funds owed. (Step 14)
- 20 • The customer would ~~Set~~ ~~set~~ the monthly fee for late or
 default payments. (Step 14)
- The customer would ~~M~~make transactions using the financial
 card with any of the millions of retailers that accept
 credit cards today. (Step 16). In doing so, the consumer
 25 makes purchases against his personal savings account

(debit) (Step 17), thus forcing the consumer to repay the funds expended prior to a deadline (credit) (Step 20); otherwise finance charges and fees are assessed against the personal savings account (Step 21).

- 5 • Once the card is in use, every month the bank or agency lending the service sends a statement to the consumer indicating the charges made and payment due (Step 19). The statement also shows interests charged for the period if a balance is due, as well as any other applicable
- 10 fees. (Step 19)
- The consumer pays his own bank account for the monthly charges. (Steps 20 and 21)
- This financial card also give customers the option to pay their financial card debt all at once, or pay a monthly
- 15 minimum with interest charged over a longer period of time. (Step 20 and Step 14)

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20 This financial card will allow the consumer to take advantage of all the benefits that credit and debit cards offer today including a safe alternative to cash, build credit history, bail out of emergencies, flexibility when cash or checks are not accepted, savings from having to stock up on

25 traveler's checks or cash when one travels, implicit guarantee

of satisfaction because as a consumer one can stop payment,
etc. However, the advantage that separates the financial card
proposed here and the financial cards that exist today is that
it allows the consumer to pay interests and fees to himself
5 or herself and not to credit lenders; thus it gives the
consumer the option to increase wealth while at the same time
keeping the consumer from going into more debt.

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Furthermore, it is well known that even people who have
high incomes, have savings and established credit lines
mismanage money, and pay interests on things that they could
pay outright. By using the financial card proposed here, these
15 group of people can become less dependable on credit lenders,
save money that they would payout in interests, and actually
increase their wealth because instead of paying interests to
credit companies they can pay themselves interests (an
indirect savings method).

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On the other hand, people who do not have savings or
established credit can benefit from this idea by simply
25 opening a savings account with a small amount of money and
over time slowly deposit money into the account until there is

enough money to start making small purchases with the financial card.

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Therefore, as opposed to credit cards available in the market today, this card offers the extra advantage that it can be used by both people who have savings and established credit and people who do not have savings or established credit.

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The present invention makes available to a specific group of consumers a financial card that provides the services that existing debit and credit cards offer today; with the exception that instead of paying interests and fees to credit lenders, the consumer who uses this card agrees to pay himself or herself for the use of his or her own funds. In other words, with this service, a consumer who has savings in a bank account (in this case a credit line) and elects this service, can make debit transactions against his or her own account and repay himself or herself for the use of the funds, plus finance charges (interests) if payments are late. Thus it gives the consumer the option to increase wealth and at the same time keep from going into more debt. The services offered by this financial card also include a safe alternative to

cash; a means of building credit history; an option when
having to bail out of emergencies; a flexible alternative when
cash or checks are not accepted; savings from having to stock
up on traveler's checks or cash when one travels; implicit
5 guarantee of satisfaction because as a consumer one can stop
payment. The most important secret to this idea for those who
elect to utilize it is that it requires some discipline to
make it a successful financial tool.

ABSTRACT

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~~This patent application~~ There is provided a system and method that makes available to a specific group of consumers a financial card that provides the services that existing debit and credit cards offer today; with the exception that instead of paying interests and fees to credit lenders, the consumer who uses this card agrees to pay himself or herself for the use of his or her own funds. In other words, with this service, a consumer who has savings in a bank account (in this case a credit line) and elects this service, can make debit transactions against his or her own account and repay himself or herself for the use of the funds, plus finance charges (interests) if payments are late. Thus it gives the consumer the option to increase wealth and at the same time keep from going into more debt. The services offered by this financial card also include a safe alternative to cash; a means of building credit history; an option when having to bail out of emergencies; a flexible alternative when cash or checks are not accepted; savings from having to stock up on traveler's checks or cash when one travels; implicit guarantee of satisfaction because as a consumer one can stop payment, ~~etc.~~